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ABSTRACT

This handbook provides advice to help parents, caregivers, and teachers arrive at personal answers to basic questions that affect children's achievement. The handbook is intended as a personal notebook in which are recorded reader responses to the home/school problems raised in the book "What Do We Say? What Do We Do?" The sections are: (1) "Confidence," detailing how to help children gain courage; (2)"Motivation," on how to help children keep interested in learning; (3) "Effort," addressing how to help children tackle hard jobs; (4) "Responsibility," on how to help children do what is right; (5) "Initiative," addressing how to help children accomplish work; (6) "Perseverance," on how to help children keep at something when success does not come immediately; (7) "Caring," detailing how to help children show love for family and friends; (8) "Teamwork," addressing how to help children work cooperatively; (9) "Common Sense," on how to help children say no; (10) "Problem Solving," outlining how to help children identify and solve a problem; (11) "Reading Together," providing checklists pertaining to parents reading aloud to children; and (12) "Keeping Track," providing a chart for recognizing and documenting a child's positive words and acts. (SD)

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Personal Reflections

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Vital Solutions for My Child's Educational Success

Based on What Do We Say? What Do We Do?®

by

Dr. Dorothy Rich

Author of **MegaSkills**

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Featuring the MegaSkills Conversation Method

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It's about time I was asked for my ideas, for my experiences...

- CONFIDENCE
- MOTIVATION
- EFFORT
- RESPONSIBILITY
- INITIATIVE
- PERSEVERANCE
- CARING
- TEAMWORK
- COMMON SENSE
- PROBLEM SOLVING

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Personal Reflections

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Vital Solutions for My Child's Educational Success

Based on What Do We Say? What Do We Do?®

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Dr. Dorothy Rich

Author of **MegaSkills®**

Featuring the MegaSkills Conversation Method

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Printed in the USA

Wanting the Best for Our Children

As parents, our greatest hopes focus on our children and helping them realize their dreams.

Today, more than ever, realizing dreams takes education.

Our children must become successful learners for life, for school and for the world beyond the classroom.

This guide belongs to

_____

Family members' names

_____

_____

_____

Year _____

Welcome to...*What Do I Say? What Do I Do?*

Sometimes we don't know what we really think until we take the time to consider it. That's the reason for this unique guide. It's designed to help each of us think about our children's education and our role in it.

This special, little book asks for your personal opinions about the problems and solutions in ***What Do We Say? What Do We Do?***

As you move through this guide, in a discussion group or in personal reflection, give yourself credit (see Keeping Track, page 46) for what you say and do...the positive big and little moments that can get overlooked in the rush of daily life.

I invite you to send me notes...your comments and your experiences. I'd really value knowing what's happening, and with your permission, to share your experiences with others.

As parents, as teachers, wanting the best for our children, we're in the same boat together on a vast ocean. We can all use help in rowing the boat across.

Dorothy Rich

Dorothy Rich, Ed.D.

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Here's your personal notebook to keep by your side as you read the *What Do We Say? What Do We Do?* book. Check the graphics...they match the sections of each book. Each chapter is separate and whole and can be read in any order you choose.

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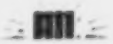
(Younger Child)

Situation
(Older Child)

Reading Together
(Younger Child)



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What Do I Say? What Do I Do? has been reviewed by educators and families across the nation: Marsha Devitt, Valerie Dorr, Holly Erez, Suzanne Granoski, Regina Gerko, Judith M. Jacobs, Cindy Kaiser, Beverly Koski, Marcia McLaughlin, Bobbi Morgan, Heather Noll, Ann Noller, Sharyn Quiros, Ann Reynolds, Dorothy Stuart, Karee Valek. Special thanks to The Education Foundation of Sarasota which brought together a focus group of parents to react to the guide's content and format.

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CONFIDENCE

Having It, Losing It, Rebuilding It

How can I help my child gain courage to say: "I can" instead of "I can't"?

Personal Inner Strength

We may be born with confidence but we do a lot of losing of it. Then we rebuild it again. It's an ongoing construction project.

Thinking to Myself

- ***What recent good thing helped to give me more confidence?***
- ***What less-than-good thing happened recently? How did it affect my confidence?***
- ***What do I remember about my own confidence when I was growing up?***

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When Friends Aren't Friends Anymore (younger children) From the story of ANGELA. She needs confidence to cope with being hurt by others.

✵ *"Why won't they be my friends?"*

- ***Do I agree that Angela needs to ask why her friends are angry?***
- ***Do I think Angela can become stronger through this experience?***

✵ *"Did something like this ever happen to you?"*

- ***How can I be upbeat even after something makes me sad?***
- ***In sharing my own experiences with my child, what do I have to watch out for?***

Reminding Myself When we feel hurt, we may think, "No one else has ever felt this way." Children may say, "You'll never understand."

- How do I reassure my child that I do understand?

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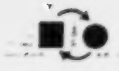

No Longer Number One (older children)
From the story of PAUL. He needs confidence to be able to cope with being second or even last, and not always number one.

✵ *"What are other kids going to think?"*

Paul is worried about "saving face."

- ***Do I take this kind of worry seriously or not... and why?***
- ***Do I find what his parents say to Paul reassuring enough?***
- ***What would I say differently to my child?***

✵ *"What am I good at?*

Paul's parents have an opportunity to help him rebuild his confidence.

- ***Do they do a good job?***
- ***Do I let my children know that it's the "learning" to get better... at whatever they do ... that is really important?***

Reminding Myself My children need to know that adult confidence has up's and down's...and here's one way I work on rebuilding my own confidence.

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My Predictions about ANGELA and PAUL

- How will Angela make new friends?
- How long will it take Paul to get his confidence restored?
- Will their parents gain renewed confidence in their children?

Surviving Rejection

When our children "hurt," they especially need our best. That's our time for listening and understanding.

Thinking to Myself

- ***How do I feel when my children feel hurt and disappointed?***
- ***How do I help them express their feelings... to feel sad but not defeated?***

The Adult Connection
Confidence for Our Schools

- ***Am I both a supporter and a critic of my child's school? How do I praise the school and how do I help it improve?***

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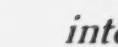
MOTIVATION

The Plague of Boredom

How can I help my child keep interested in learning and school and keep from saying those dreaded words, "I'm bored"



I Want To Do It

Especially today, children can get the idea that they need to be entertained and have "fun" all the time. This presents a problem for all those times when they may not be having "fun."

Thinking to Myself

- ***Do I believe that it is a parent's responsibility to keep a child from being bored?***
- ***How do I feel when my child says, "I'm bored!"***
  How do I respond?

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A Lot of Everything (younger children)
From the Story of LAURA. She needs her own motivation without having to depend so much on others.

✵ *"My teacher told me that I need motivation."*

Just as young children learn about motivation, they can also learn about building it.

- ***Do I know what encourages and discourages my child?***
- ***How do I help my child work against becoming discouraged?***

✵ *Will I ever get to like school?*

Laura's parents encourage her to recognize the realities of life at school.

- ***When my children complain about silly or unfair rules at school, do I try to help them think about which rules are fair and which aren't and what we can try to do about them?***

Reminding Myself We have mixed memories about school. Can I share some of my own...the less than good and the good?

Notes _____

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It's Boring! (Older children) From the Story of KEVIN. He needs motivation to keep from feeling bored so easily.

✵ *Were you bored in school?*

- ***What do I think of the parents' answer--that we have to count on ourselves as well as on the teachers?***
- ***How do we find our special interests?***

✵ *Why pick on me?*

- ***Is there a danger of repeating, "I'm bored" so that it becomes a way of thinking?***
- ***Do I accept the answer that we have the power to unbore ourselves?***
- ***How would I adapt this answer to make it helpful for my child?***

Reminding Myself How can I convey to my child a larger sense of the future...with its potential and opportunities?

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My Predictions for LAURA and KEVIN.

- When will Laura come home and say, "I like school!"?
- What new interests might engage Kevin so that he rarely thinks about being bored?

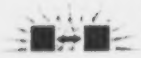
Over Motivated?

Is it possible to want something so much that it can get us in trouble?

Thinking to Myself

We tend to worry about under--motivation.

- *Do we overlook the dangerous motivation that can be so intense that it can push us into trouble?*
- *Do I recognize any of that in myself or in my own children?*
  If so, how do I try to handle it?



The Adult Connection To Reward or Not To Reward

- *How am I working to build my children's own sense of inner rewards so that they do not have to depend on others to find out what is meaningful for them?*

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EFFORT

Homework and Beyond

How can I help my child tackle hard jobs without thinking they are too tough to handle?

The Look and Sound of Effort

"As good parents, our goal is to help our children make more Effort...not just homework, but it is a start. Above all, we have to help our child understand the satisfaction of effort."

Thinking to Myself

- ***How do I react when a task or assignment seems just too hard to do?***
- ***What are the satisfactions of effort that I have experienced in school and beyond?***
- ***What efforts have I made recently?***

Notes _____

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Homework Hassle (younger children) The Story of TIM. He needs to make the effort to buckle down and do his own work.

✵ *"Homework is boring. Why do I have to do it all?"*

- ***Do I agree or disagree with the answer given by Tim's parents?***
- ***Why and why not? What would I say differently?***

✵ *"I don't like my teacher."*

- ***How do I feel about the answer Tim's parents give him?***
- ***Have I ever had an experience like this with my own children or when I was a child? What did I feel and think?***

Reminding Myself I need to convey the impression that my children can do the work they have to do. Here is one way I put across this message.

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Homework and Heartache
(older children) The story of JESSICA. She has to resolve a problem about fairness, and she talks with her parents:

❋ *"How can something like this happen? What can I do?"*

- *What do I think of the answers her parents provide?*
- *Would I answer differently?*
  If yes, why? If no, why??

❋ *"Will you go see the teacher for me?"*

- *Did Jessica's parents give the right answer?*
- *How would I respond if my child asked me the same question?*

Reminding Myself I need to talk with my child about efforts I make to work on a project. Here is one idea I'll share.

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My Predictions about TIM and JESSICA.

- Will they take their parents' advice? Or ignore it?
- How will their problems work out?

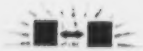
Effort Can Get Complicated

"Our job as parents is to prepare our children to make hard efforts, and to keep making them, even and especially when they get discouraged."

Thinking to Myself

- *Do I prepare my children for effort, so that win or lose, they feel they have accomplished something*

- *How do I help my children handle disappointment...so that they move on and make efforts once again?*



The Adult Connection
Whose Homework Is It Anyway?

- *What is a parent's role in a child's homework?*

- *Do I agree with the advice in this book? Yes? No? Why?*

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RESPONSIBILITY

Finding The Best In Ourselves

How can I help my child do what's right...even and especially when I am not around?

Beyond "Brush Your Teeth"

A young child starts out pleading, "Let me do it." As children get older, they start to object, "Do I really have to do it?" Children test adults—it's natural and it just happens.

Thinking to Myself

- *How am I helping my children get into the habit of being responsible?*
- *How do I react as my children test me?*
- *What challenges do we both face?*

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Losing a Backpack and Finding the Truth (younger children) From the story of SUSIE. She needs the responsibility of being truthful.

❋ *"You do believe me, don't you?"*

Parents want wholeheartedly to believe their child...yet sometimes there is more to the story.

- ***Do my children have a sense that they can tell me the truth?***
- ***How do I encourage the full story...without making my children feel that I don't believe them?***

❋ *"What are you going to do now?"*

Susie's parents turn the question back to Susie.

- ***Is this a useful approach? Yes? No? Why?***
- ***In a case like this, what do I think my children would expect me to do?***

Reminding Myself I realize that the best discipline teaches and doesn't just punish. How do I try to combine teaching with discipline and consequences?

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What Friends Are For (older children)
From the story of ALAN. He needs responsibility to follow up on his worries about his friend.

✵ *"What do you think we ought to do?"*

Alan feels unsure about where responsibility ends and meddling begins.

- ***How do I help my children cope with their responsibilities to their friends?***
- ***Do I think that the approach suggested by Alan's parents will be helpful?***

✵ *"Do grownups always know how to make the right choice?*

Children can get the idea that grownups have some magic formula for knowing what's right. That's true even when they tell us that we don't know what we are talking about.

- ***How do I share my own struggles about decisions without scaring my children?***

Reminding Myself How am I giving my children "responsibility practice"?

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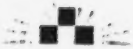
My Predictions about SUSIE and ALAN.

- Will telling the truth get easier for Susie?
- Will Alan be able to figure out his responsibilities to his friend?



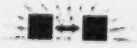
Parent and Child Responsibilities

Our responsibilities change over time, as we move from school to work and to family life.

Thinking to Myself

- *How have mine changed? Can I share these thoughts?*

My children may really want to hear about my childhood and how things are different or the same. And, I need to remember that not everything was better back then.



The Adult Connection
The Education Pledge

Responsibilities for children's education connect school and home.

- ***What idea can I share with teachers that can help us meet our mutual responsibilities more easily?***

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INITIATIVE

Making Moves

How can I help my child feel brave and have the "get up and go" that it takes to get things moving?

It's New...It's Scary

A difficult experience for a child is having to move to a new school in a new city or to a new school in the same town.

Thinking to Myself

- ***Has this happened to me? What made it hard?***
- ***How can I help when my child has to face big moves like these?***

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The New School (younger children) From the Story of MARIA. She needs initiative to be less shy.

❋ *"Will 'they' like me?"*

- ***What do I think of the experience her parents shared and the advice they gave her? They talk to her about taking the initiative to connect with new classmates.***

- ***How would my child benefit from this kind of advice?***

❋ *"Will I be smart enough?."*

- ***This feeling of insecurity is very typical, especially in a new situation. What experiences can I share with my kids to show that I have survived and grown even in difficult times?***

Reminding Myself Initiatives don't have to be big to be important. I need to observe and recognize my child's daily initiatives. Here is an example:

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Actions That Make All the Difference (older children) From the Story of TAMARA. She needs initiative to be more optimistic. In this chapter Tamara learns how others use Initiative to handle difficult situations.

✱"The call that didn't get returned."
Andrew can't learn about his homework assignment because the girl he called did not call him back.

- ***What do I think he should do?***
- ***Do I agree with the advice his parents give him?***

✱"Getting called on in school."
When Janet raises her hand to answer a question, the teacher always seems to call on someone else.

- ***What do I think she should do?***
- ***How can she expect the teacher to respond?***

Reminding Myself To create a sense of security, little things can mean a lot. These include visiting the new school or drawing a map from home to school. How do I start to build my child's security in a time of change?

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My Predictions about MARIA and TAMARA.

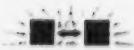
- What will it really take to help them get over being scared?
- What are the next steps for their families?

Keeping Optimistic

Some students facing new experiences become afraid to use their inititiatve. These students often put themselves down, and they tend to assume that the worst will happen.

Thinking to Myself

- *Do I know people who put themselves down?*
- *Is this a common kind of problem, especially in early adolescence?*
- *If my child does this, what do I say? Does it help my child?*



The Adult Connection
New Home/New School

Handling a move can be scary...even for adults.

- *How do I try to overcome my fears when I am in a new situation? What are my first steps?*

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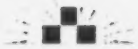
PERSEVERANCE

Making Time

How can I help my child keep at something, keep practicing and trying...especially when success doesn't happen at first?



The Pain and The Glory

Children need to know... Sports figures practice and practice...then maybe have a chance for the majors. The same is true of authors, of business people, of musicians. There are few "overnight" successes.

Thinking to Myself

- ***How am I teaching my children to persevere?***
- ***What have I accomplished because I have used perseverance?***
- ***Can I find at least one new way to help my child experience the results of perseverance?***

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Into Everything At Once (younger children) The Story of STEVEN. He needs to be able to pay attention.

✵ *"My teacher says that I complain a lot."*

- ***How do I feel about the response Steven gets from his parents?***
- ***Are they too unsympathetic?***
- ***Would I respond differently?***

✵ *"Do I have to finish everything I start?"*

- ***Do I think his parents have the right approach?***
- ***Are they too lenient?***
- ***What do I say when my kids don't finish what they start?***

Reminding Myself Even when we persevere, we don't always succeed. Here is a the message I try to put across.

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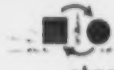

You Can Do Better! (older children) The story of DAVID. He needs to be able to do more than the bare minimum.

✵ *"Why does my teacher think I don't try hard enough?"*

- *What do I think of his parents' answer...how he tries hard in some areas but not in others? Would that answer be helpful to my youngster?*
- *How does it help children to learn when they are using their perseverance?*

✵ *"Why can't I just quit?"*

"You can," say his parents: What do I think of David having to suffer his own consequences?

- *How about the memories his parents share with David? Can that kind of response be helpful in my house?*

Reminding Myself We can't persevere for our children. They have to do it themselves. Yet they need practice and my support for their work.

- *How am I providing my child with the support that it takes to persevere?*

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My predictions about STEVEN and DAVID.

- Does David get better at perseverance?
- Does Steven learn to complain less?
- What do I think will happen?
  Why?

Keeping At It

Perseverance is very important all through life, and it's definitely basic for doing well in school.

Thinking to Myself

- *Do we always have to persevere at everything we do?*

- *When do I think it is OK not to persevere? When do we have no choice except to persevere?*

The Adult Connection
School/Home/School

Both teachers and parents complain about the difficulty of reaching each other. Here is one idea to make this communication easier.

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CARING

Showing That We Care

How can I help my child show love for the family and learn more about friendship?

Our Caring Children.

We want children "hard" enough to stand up for themselves, to withstand the stresses of the world. Yet, our children need to be "soft" enough to express their feelings of love and involvement with others.

Thinking to Myself

- ***What are the ways in which I am "hard" and "soft"?***
- ***How do my children express their different sides?***

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The New Boy (younger children) From the story of TOMMY and DMITRI. Tommy needs caring to help a new classmate.

❋ *"Do I have to do it?"*

- ***What do I think of the way Tommy's parents list his choices and leave it up to him to make his decision?***

- ***Do I do this*** with my child?

❋ *"They'll make fun of me,"*

Instead of denying it, Tommy's parents say that it might happen. Then, they discuss what Tommy can do when and if it does happen.

- ***What do I think of how they handle this situation?***

- ***Do I do it the same way or differently?***

Reminding Myself We hope that our children recognize the caring of their families. Just in case, I will take a moment to tell my child about how members of our family care for each other.

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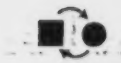

Attention Must Be Paid (older children)
From the story of ROBERT. Robert's parents ask his teacher about Robert's problem.

"What's happening with Robert?"

- *What do I think of how this teacher responds to Robert's parents?*
- *How have I experienced this kind of caring from my child's teachers?*

"What kinds of activities at home will really help?"

- *What do I think of the teacher's ideas?*
- *Do they make sense?*
- *Would some of them work for my child, too?*

Reminding Myself Teachers are not mind readers. They cannot know what is happening at home unless we tell them.

Can I think of at least one thing that would be helpful to discuss with my child's teacher?

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My Predictions about TOMMY and ROBERT.

- Do their parents follow through on the advice they are given?
- How long does it take for them to feel differently?

Resolving Conflicts

How can we strike a working balance, at least on most days, between the kind of caring that suffocates and the caring that gives our children room to grow?

Thinking to Myself

- ***How do I help my children recognize their angers and try to deal with them?***
- ***Am I a role model for how I handle my own angers? What do I do and what do I need to learn to do?***

The Adult Connection
The Kind of Caring That Counts

What support do I think my child needs in order to feel more cared for? What support do I already provide? What new "caring" words and actions can I try?

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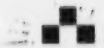
TEAMWORK

The Hard Part

How can I help my child work cooperatively with others and with me, too?



Teamwork: Easy to Talk About. Hard to Do.

Teamwork can be very difficult for children in the competitive atmosphere of a school.

It's no secret that children can be very cruel to each other. Young children tease, "You can't play with us." Older children rebel, "I just won't help!" There is a lot of teaching to be done.

Thinking to Myself

- ***How is my child learning teamwork at school?***
- ***Can I think of at least one activity at home that can help teach my child about teamwork?***

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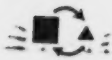

The Team Doesn't Want Me (younger children) The Story of TONI. She needs help getting accepted.

✵ *"How can I make them want me?".*

- ***What do I think of the advice Toni's parents give her?***
- ***Do I talk enough with my own child about having self-respect and what it means?***

✵ *"They tease and bully me. Should I just do what they want me to do?"*

Toni's parents use role playing to help Toni learn how to resist bullying.

- ***Can I use this technique with my own child? Do I think it will help?***

Reminding Myself Toni's parents talk about having a response ready when other children tease her.

- ***Have I worked enough with my own child to be ready for a difficult situation like this?***
- ***What responses do I encourage my child to use?***

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The Team Is Letting Me Down
(older children) The story of JASON. He needs to get his team to work.

✵ *"What can I say to these kids?"*

- ***What do I think of his parents telling Jason that he needs to be the "coach"?***
- ***When my children complain about other kids not doing their share, what do I say?***

✵ *"What can I say to the teacher?"*

- ***Do Jason's parents give him good advice? If so, in what way?***
- ***Do I remember a time when I had to talk with a teacher about a problem?***

Reminding Myself When I encourage my child to talk with the teacher about a problem that needs to be solved, what kind of advice do I provide?

- ***Do I say the teacher is always right? Always wrong?***
- ***Or do I try to find a middle ground?***

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My Predictions about TONI and JASON.

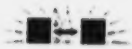
- What lessons about teamwork do they learn?
- Do they come through sadder and wiser...or just wiser?

Teamwork: A Lot More Than Being Nice

Even when working towards a common goal, everyone is not going to agree. Being on a team involves complex behaviors--being "with" others and being with our selves at the same time. This is difficult, especially for children.

Thinking to Myself

- ***How am I helping my children learn how to be accepted without losing their own individuality?***
- ***How am I helping my children learn how to stand up for their own rights without putting others down?***



The Adult Connection Parent and Teacher Stress

Stress comes to school from home and goes back home again. How do I "team" with my child's teacher to battle the common stresses of the home/school relationship?

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COMMON SENSE

Getting In The Habit Of "Knowing Better"

How can I help my child know how to stay out of trouble and to say "no"...when "no" is the right answer?

Common Sense...Where Is It?

Telling children to be careful and to use their common sense is what most of us tend to say. It gets to be a habit. While it's a start, it's nowhere near enough.

Thinking to Myself

- ***What do I say to my children as I urge them to use their common sense? How do they respond to me?***
- ***Are there any other words, I could use that might work just as well...or better?***

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Staying Out of Trouble (younger children)

The story of RANDY. He needs more common sense to keep from getting into trouble.

❋ *"Why do I always get blamed?"*

- ***What do I think of the advice Randy gets from his parents? They say that there's a natural tendency to blame others.***
- ***What could I say to my child who may feel he/she is getting unfairly blamed?***

❋ *"How can I keep from getting into trouble?"*

Randy's parents encourage him to see himself doing things and to envision how they will turn out.

- ***Will this answer help Randy?***
- ***Would it help my child to picture how his/her actions affect others?***

Reminding Myself Children know more about common sense than we may think. Like most parents, I know that I need to give my child more opportunity to talk. And I need to take more time to listen. Here is one way I will build more listening time into our daily life.

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I Want To Be Like Them (older children)
From the Story of MARY. She needs common sense not to be overly influenced by others.

✵ *"I'll never be accepted."*

Mary's parents try to help her cope with peer pressure.

- ***What do you think of their advice?***
- ***What do I say to my children when I see them trying to cope with pressures from other kids at school?***

✵ *"I worry so much about school."*

Mary's parents suggest ways to help her feel comfortable in her new situation.

- ***What do I think of their ideas?***
- ***What other ideas would I use?***

Reminding Myself Children have real worries. It doesn't help to make fun of them.

I need to figure out a balance between taking these worries seriously and taking them too seriously. How do I try to use my own common sense about this?

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My Predictions about RANDY and MARY.

- Will they stop feeling sorry for themselves?
- What will be a sign that each one is showing more common sense?

Knowing Our "Minds"

An important job for parents is to help children keep things in perspective...so that they can become more grownup.

Thinking to Myself

Mary's parents tell her to be "her own person."

- *Do I say that in those words or in similar words to my own children?*
  Do they know what I mean?
- *Are there experiences from my own life that I can share with my children about my own efforts to be "my own person"?*

The Adult Connection
Now, Later, Never

Having a sense of what's important and what's less important is basic to common sense. It's not easy.

- *How do I try to figure out what I have to do...now, later, never?*

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PROBLEM SOLVING

Families Learning Together

How can I help my child learn how to identify a problem, think of a number of ways to solve it and then try out some of these ways?

Step-by-Step

This chapter focuses on a five step method for both adults and children. The goal is to ask ourselves five questions...almost as soon as a problem comes up.

Thinking to Myself

- ***What's the problem?***
- ***What can I do?***
- ***What do I try first?***
- ***How do I know it's working?***
- ***What do I do next?***

Eric and Donna have problems identified by their teachers. In this chapter, we "listen" to their parents to see how the problem solving system works, to hear some of their questions and to consider how we would answer them.

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Do It For Me (younger children) From the story of ERIC. He's a whiner, always asking for attention. At home, his parents give in. At school, his whining becomes a problem that his parents have to help solve.

"What is Eric's real problem?

- *Do I agree with the teacher's thinking that Eric may be starved for attention...or is he already getting too much?*

- *Do I like the way Eric is asked to help brainstorm solutions? Do I involve my child in our home problem solving?*

"How do we know that the solution we select is working?"

- *Do I try to make sure that we are working towards realistic, attainable goals?*
- *How do I measure progress in solving problems?*

Reminding Myself I'll ask my child to name an everyday problem and we'll try the five step system. Here's the problem:

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The Perfectionist Trap (older children)
From the story of DONNA. Donna is so worried about her work that it keeps her from doing it. Her teacher asks her parents to help solve the problem.

❋ *"I hate making mistakes."*

- ***Do I agree with what Donna's parents tell her?***
- ***What do I think of her parents telling Donna that she needs to make mistakes?***

❋ *"I have so much work. I'll never be able to do it."*

- ***Can I use the strategy about "just getting started,"...doing a draft...taking a first step that can be improved later?***

Reminding Myself I don't have all the right answers in advance. Neither will my child. We try and test ideas all the time.

- ***What have I learned from making a mistake?***

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My Predictions about ERIC and DONNA

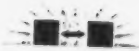
These kids have changes to make in their own attitudes and behaviors. So do their parents. When do I think they will reach their goals?

Making Changes

It's said that it's easier for children to change than it is for adults.

- *What change have I had to make recently? How easy? How hard was it?*

- *What change have my children made? How easy? How hard was it?*



The Adult Connection
The Benefits of Experience

We're always told that experience is the best teacher. What have I learned from my experiences that have increased my problem solving abilities?

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Reading Together

At the end of every chapter of *What Do We Say? What Do We Do?* you will find recommended books for each MegaSkill.

Sharing books -- especially reading aloud together -- is a great way to open up discussions about emotionally-loaded topics and problems. It's also a great way for children to learn more about themselves and about others...without being lectured to. It's the books and their stories that do the "talking."

Check these lists with your children...and go to your local library to check out titles that interest you both. Remember to share books that you personally remember liking...your memories and your pleasure will carry over to your children.

Making Our Choices: Books My Child and I Want To Read...(add paper for your growing list)

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After reading each book, give it a "grade." Will you recommend this book to others and why? What will you want to read next?

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Keeping Track/Giving Myself Credit

What Do I Say? What Do I Do?

We're always being told to catch our children doing things right. Let's do the same for ourselves.

The goal of this personal reflections guide is to help us say positive words we might not have said and do positive actions we might not have taken.

For each of the MegaSkills below, give yourself credit for those words and actions you use. You may want to jot a note down to remember them.

Give yourself a gift...it need not be "material." It might be "time" for something special.

(Transfer this chart to larger paper - so that you have more room for writing.)

MegaSkills	My Positive Words	My Positive Actions
Confidence		
Motivation		
Effort		
Responsibility		
Initiative		
Perseverance		
Caring		
Teamwork		
Common Sense		
Problem Solving		
Giving a Gift to Myself		

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You'll Want to Know More about MegaSkills® and the Home and School Institute Services...

The Home and School Institute (HSI) is an independent, nonprofit educational organization. Since 1972, HSI, founded by Dr. Dorothy Rich, develops programs and publications to support the educational role of the family and the role of schools in teaming with families and communities.

MegaSkills Leader Training Workshops: The MegaSkills Education Center under the leadership of Harriett Stonehill, Director, trains and certifies MegaSkills leaders to conduct parent workshops. This program, now in 48 states and available in Spanish, is sponsored by schools, businesses, and community organizations.

MegaSkills Essentials for the Classroom: This program trains teachers/leaders to provide MegaSkills activities in character development and MegaSkills attitudes and behaviors.

What Do We Say? What Do We Do? and other MegaSkills Publications

Personal Reflection Guides for *What Do We Say? What Do We Do?* are ideal for use by adult education, PTA's and parent meetings. For additional copies contact HSI, and ask about quantity orders.

To learn more about these nationally acclaimed training institutes and materials, check the MegaSkills web page: **http://www.MegaSkillsHSI.org**
call 202-466-3633 or Fax: 202-833-1400.

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HOME AND SCHOOL INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS

Contact HSI for costs and order form, see HSI address below.

The nonprofit Home and School Institute was begun three decades ago with the basic question: What is it that every teacher, every family, working in partnership can do to help every child succeed. While HSI training materials are available only through the MegaSkills training programs, HSI has developed related publications to reach the wider public.

MEGASKILLS® Grades Pre K-8

Revised and updated. Teach confidence, motivation, effort, responsibility, initiative, perseverance, caring, teamwork, common sense, problem solving and focus. The new edition includes new sections: information age activities, readiness to learn and the role of grandparents.

SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR TODAY'S PARENTS: BOOK & AUDIO CASSETTE

Grades K-6 Tested, easy activities for home use: reading, writing, math, science thinking activities to help parents help children learn. Easy to use and listen to home activities for parents to do with children. Learning: Morning, Noon, Night Activities

LEARNING & WORKING

Family Read & Do Activities, Intro. pack for schools contains 5 kits. Early start on school-to-work programs. Upper elementary and middle school. Ideal for family resource libraries.

MEGASKILLS PARENT HANDBOOK (English)

Designed to introduce and reinforce the MegaSkills experience. Easy to use, step-by-step activities and "tips" for families.

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Parent involvement and literacy focus with English and Spanish pages face to face.

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Practical strategies to build partnerships with families and the community. Ideal for site-based management and parent advisory councils.

MEGASKILLS TREASURES

Charts based on MegaSkills activities, for families to use and post at home.

The HSI Parent Shelf Library contains a variety of parent education books, including *MegaSkills* published by Houghton Mifflin. Book orders from the HSI office require a minimum, prepaid order. For a HSI publication list and a free MegaSkills Message, "Vacation Education," send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: **Home and School Institute, MegaSkills Education Center, 1500 Massachusetts Ave, NW Washington, DC 20005.** 202-466-3633
WWW.MegaSkillsHSI.org E-Mail: hsidra@erols.com Fax: 202-833-1400

Education has never been more important. For our children to have good jobs in the future and to lead good lives, they need, as never before, to gain a solid education, to become self-disciplined, and to know how to problem solve. Basically, they have to know how to learn and to keep on learning.
So do we...the adults in their lives.

If we ever wanted a challenge, a climb up Mount Everest, this is IT. It's breathtaking, scary and exhilarating...it's education for children and for parents, together.

The best is within everyone's reach. It's corny, and it's true.

* * * *

This little book is a great way to give ourselves credit for our own judgments and experiences.

What Do I *Say? What Do* I *Do?* is the personal notebook, recording every reader's responses to the typical home/school problems raised in *What Do We Say? What Do We Do?* book.

Author and educator, Dr. Dorothy Rich, creator of MegaSkills, is known as the Dr. Spock of education. She designed *What Do* I *Say? What Do* I *Do?* to enable parents, grandparents and teachers across the nation to recognize, to build and to share their judgment and experience.

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